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RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
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SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W, INL/C, INL/AE, AND INR

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KCOR](#) [KCRM](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: FURTHER HARASSMENT OF FORMER EFCC CHAIR
RIBADU

REF: LAGOS 473

Classified By: DCM Lisa Piascik for reasons 1.4. (b & d).

¶1. (S) SUMMARY: In the latest attempt to discredit Former EFCC Chairman Nuhu Ribadu, he and his family were physically escorted away from his graduation ceremony from the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) in Jos on November 22. On November 24, Ribadu came to the Embassy to discuss the incident with DCM (PolCouns and PolOff-notetaker, also attended). During the meeting, however, Ribadu focused more on his concern for his physical safety the longer he remains in Nigeria, claiming that a group of five former police officers from Benue State are trying to kill him. End Summary.

¶2. (S) On November 22, former EFCC Chair Nuhu Ribadu, his wife, his six children, and 40 of his personal guests were physically removed from the graduation ceremony at NIPSS. In a separate meeting on November 24 with DCM, Ribadu explained the incident as extremely brazen, but "one of many attempts to discredit and humiliate" him. He also claimed that Attorney General Michael Aondakaa, who was present at the NIPSS graduation, and the Inspector General of Police Mika Okiro, orchestrated the incident, which he said "was approved by Yara'Adua himself."

¶3. (S/NF) Ribadu said that he grows more concerned for his physical safety the longer he remains in Nigeria. He claimed to know for certain that five former police officers from Benue State--two of whom were dismissed for cause--are trying to kill him, noting that the Attorney General also comes from Benue. He remarked that he did not stay at home the previous two nights for fear these former policemen might harm his family in their attempt to get to him. Ribadu said that he is planning to travel to his home state of Adamawa, where he will maintain a low profile for at least the remainder of this week; then travel to the UK, where he has "business" to attend to; and then on to the US to visit friends. His family will remain in Nigeria unless Ribadu feels it is unsafe for them to do so. When asked if he believed he would be able to leave Nigeria, Ribadu said he understood his name was possibly "on a list" to prevent him from doing so, but did not believe this would pose much of a problem.

¶4. (S/NF) DCM told Ribadu that we had heard that the Nigeria's State Security Service (SSS) was interested in his relationship with the USG. Ribadu confided that he considers the SSS to be professional and above political game-playing and that its Director, Afakriya Gadzama, is a friend. He further intimated that the SSS was working with him to pursue the individuals who want to assassinate him.

¶5. (S/NF) Ribadu also expressed concern for his former EFCC colleague and friend, Ibrahim Magu; he claims Magu is in danger because of his specific knowledge of the President's relationship with Dahiru Mangal (an influential wealthy northern businessman who is currently under investigation and has ties to the Yar'Adua family and administration) and a money laundering operation which fronts as a legitimate company.

¶6. (S) As he has postulated before, Ribadu said that the root of the problem lies at the Presidential Villa, where, he charged, "the President, his Attorney General and Inspector General of Police are gradually transforming anti-corruption institutions into institutions that protect corruption." When asked about last week's UK court decision ruling that evidence against former Delta State Governor James Ibori was inadmissible since it was not submitted through the Attorney General in accordance with mutual legal assistance treaty provisions, Ribadu asserted that the UK has enough evidence either to appeal the decision or try Ibori without it in future. (Note: Ribadu also claimed that Ibori and Aondoakaa threw a large party to celebrate the ruling. End Note.) When asked about A.B. Okauru's recent resignation from the

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NFIU, Ribadu said he believed Okauru was forced to leave because he refused requests to target his investigations politically. Ribadu lamented that Nigeria no longer has the zeal it once had to combat corruption and that the last and only hope for Nigeria is a change in the current leadership of the country.

¶6. (S/NF) COMMENT: Ribadu and his family's very public removal from his graduation ceremony is bizarrely thuggish, and has drawn considerable press criticism. Equally worrisome is that this harassment appears to be part of a purge of anti-corruption experts, which may be consolidating AG Aondoakaa's control over Nigeria's anti-corruption apparatus. While Ribadu's fears for his own safety may be legitimate, we suspect that his claims about it are also motivated by a personal vendetta toward the President, whom he blames for stripping him of his position; hence his repeated attempt to discredit and demonize Yara'Adua in front of USG officials. End comment.

¶7. (U) This cable coordinated with Consulate Lagos.
Sanders